

Today, Rep. Bruce Braley (D-Iowa) sent a letter to Secretary of Commerce Carlos Gutierrez urging him to expedite the processing of \$100 million in disaster relief funding from the Economic Development Administration (EDA). The \$2.65 billion disaster recovery package, passed into law on June 30th, contained \$100 million in Economic Development funding, with \$52.6 million allocated for disaster relief in Iowa and surrounding states.

**Washington, DC** - Today, Rep. Bruce Braley (D-Iowa) sent a letter to Secretary of Commerce Carlos Gutierrez urging him to expedite the processing of \$100 million in disaster relief funding from the Economic Development Administration (EDA). The \$2.65 billion disaster recovery package, passed into law on June 30th, contained \$100 million in Economic Development funding, with \$52.6 million allocated for disaster relief in Iowa and surrounding states.

The Department of Commerce released the funding to the Economic Development Administration regional offices; however, they anticipate it could take up to two months to make a final decision on each completed grant request. EDA funding is distributed through a competitive grant process.

"I urge the Secretary of Commerce to quickly distribute this needed funding to Iowa communities impacted by the recent flooding," Braley said. "We cannot let administrative roadblocks stand in the way of needed recovery funding. I will continue working to ensure that Iowa receives the promised funding as quickly as possible and that Iowa communities have the resources they need to rebuild."

Braley's letter encourages Secretary Gutierrez to increase awareness of the EDA funding, make the application process easier, and expedite the processing of requests.

Braley, along with other members of Iowa's congressional delegation, sent a letter to Secretary Gutierrez on July 23, 2008 urging the release of \$100 million in economic development funds. Yesterday, the Department of Commerce responded to the request. A copy of Braley's letter is attached and below:

---

August 26, 2008

Dear Secretary Gutierrez,

Thank you for your letter dated August 20, 2008, responding to the July 23, 2008 request of the Iowa delegation to release the \$100 million that Congress allocated to the Economic Development Administration (EDA).

While I am glad to learn that EDA has now decided to release this funding to its regional offices, I remain very concerned about the lengthy process before these funds will be distributed to the Iowa communities that need them. This funding is critical to the recovery process, and the quicker it is in the hands of local entities, the quicker the projects can begin that will help Iowans move past these disasters and towards economic redevelopment. In an effort to help Iowans recover as quickly as possible, I urge you to take the following steps:

1. Engage in a full-scale awareness campaign in Iowa to ensure that impacted communities are aware of the availability of these funds, and can act on them promptly.

2. Move up the date of EDA's anticipated "single-step application process," from the current proposed release date of October 2008. I urge you to commit such staff and discretionary resources as necessary to make this easier application process available as quickly as possible.

3. Expedite the process of reviewing the Iowa applications for this EDA funding. EDA's request for proposals states that "up to two months are required for EDA to reach a final decision after receipt of a complete application." I urge you to commit a sufficient amount of staff and resources to the Denver Regional Office to ensure an expeditious process of reviewing the Iowa applications as soon as possible.

Critical infrastructure and businesses are in urgent need of repair and replacement, and these

EDA funds passed by Congress can go a long way towards helping Iowans recover from these unprecedented disasters. These funds will also quickly create jobs, encourage private investment, and make great strides towards our long-term economic recovery. I am hopeful that you can help get these funds to the communities that need them by moving the application process along as quickly as possible.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Bruce Braley